

Transactions

DECEMBER 2007/
JANUARY 2008

TRANSPORTATION NEWS
FOR THE NINE-COUNTY
SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA



Tune In



S.F. Mayor Gavin Newsom

“On the Move” — the Movie
Tune in to <www.mtc.ca.gov/T2035> to watch the entire “On the Move” conference, including keynote speeches by San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom and Dr. Manuel Pastor of the University of Southern California (director, Program for Environmental and Regional Equity, Center for Sustainable Cities); and a lively panel discussion featuring Carl Guardino, president and CEO of the Silicon Valley Leadership Group and a member of the California Transportation Commission, and Stuart Cohen, executive director of the Transportation and Land Use Coalition, along with local elected officials.



In Print

New and Improved:
*The ABCs of MTC and
Getting There on Transit*

Now you can wow your friends and colleagues with your mastery of “transportationese” — thanks to *The ABCs of MTC*. Replacing the *Citizens’ Guide to MTC*, the handy primer includes an updated glossary of six dozen key transportation terms and acronyms along with statistics about the Bay Area transportation network and instructions for getting involved in the process for planning and funding new transportation facilities.

MTC’s *Getting There on Transit* brochure also has been updated. The compact brochure packs in detailed route maps for more than two-dozen bus, rail and ferry systems around the region plus close-up downtown maps. Other features include a directory of paratransit operators, a guide to airport transportation and directions for reaching more than 250 popular destinations.

Order both publications free of charge by e-mailing <library@mtc.ca.gov> or calling 510.817.5836.



Drawing a capacity crowd, the “On the Move” event signaled a new era of interagency cooperation in which MTC and ABAG have pledged to use the region’s long-range Transportation 2035 Plan as a tool for combating global warming.

Climate Change Hits Home at Regional “On the Move” Conference

REGIONAL AGENCIES JOIN FORCES TO CREATE A GREENER FUTURE FOR THE BAY AREA

A decade or two from now, we may well look back at the “On the Move” conference as the defining moment when the San Francisco Bay Area’s leaders and body politic truly began to confront the challenge of global warming, and the necessity of adopting more climate-friendly growth policies, transportation pricing strategies and personal commute habits. Held in Oakland in late October, the capacity event was historic on several levels, not the least of which was the joint sponsorship by MTC and its sister regional agency, the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG). The gathering signaled a new era of cooperation in which the two regional bodies will integrate their respective efforts to map out a more sustainable future for the Bay Area.



On hand to witness the union were some 700 participants from every corner of the region, including public sector staff, community and environmental advocates, elected officials, business people, and concerned citizens. They came for an update on — and to provide input to — the *Transportation 2035 Plan*, due for adoption by MTC in early 2009. Attendees also were briefed on the status of “FOCUS,” a parallel interagency effort spearheaded by ABAG to create more sustainable communities*.

In a symbolic gesture, the two agencies’ leaders shared the podium

for the morning’s overview of challenges and choices facing the region. MTC Executive Director Steve Heminger traded turns at the microphone with ABAG Executive Director Henry Gardner in a provocative discussion of strategies for substantially reducing congestion and the main culprit behind global warming, carbon dioxide emissions (CO₂) from cars and other sources.

Dialing Back the Heat — And the Clock

“The good news is that the Bay Area actually is growing more slowly than the rest of the state,” said Heminger. “And in that sense, we have a more manageable challenge.



After hearing experts and local officials talk about several provocative proposals for taming climate change and traffic congestion while promoting social equity, participants gathered into lively discussion groups.



Via e-polling, participants provided instant feedback on priorities and policy options.

Our population will increase only by about 25 percent over the next couple of decades. The state of California’s population will grow by over 40 percent.”

Still, that translates to an influx of nearly 2 million new residents with the potential for further erosion of the environment and additional clogging of the region’s already jammed highways. Whereas previous planning efforts on the part of both agencies have settled for slowing the rate of deterioration in various environmental and quality-of-life indicators, this new joint effort aims to actually turn the clock back to a better time.

In initial analyses, the agencies have been working with a goal of reducing carbon dioxide emissions to 52,000 tons a day regionwide by 2035, 40 percent below 1990

Continued on back page

Calendar

Unless indicated otherwise, all meetings take place at: Metropolitan Transportation Commission Joseph P. Bort MetroCenter Lawrence D. Dahms Auditorium 101 Eighth Street, Oakland (Across from the Lake Merritt BART station)

THURSDAY
JANUARY 3, 2008

10:30 am
Elderly and Disabled Advisory Committee

TUESDAY
JANUARY 8, 2008

10 am
Transportation 2035 Project Submission/ Data Workshop

3:30 pm
Minority Citizens Advisory Committee

WEDNESDAY
JANUARY 9, 2008

9:30 am
Bay Area Toll Authority Oversight Committee*

9:45 am
Administration Committee*

10 am
Programming and Allocations Committee*

12:30 pm
MTC Advisory Council

FRIDAY
JANUARY 11, 2008

9:30 am
Planning Committee*

10:30 am
Operations Committee*

10:40 am
Legislation Committee*

MONDAY
JANUARY 14, 2008

2 pm
TransLink® Operating Group
Location to be determined

THURSDAY
JANUARY 17, 2008

10 am
Transportation 2035 Joint Advisory Committees Workshop

FRIDAY
JANUARY 18, 2008

10 am
ABAG/BAAQMD/BCDC/MTC Joint Policy Committee*

WEDNESDAY
JANUARY 23, 2008

10 am
Bay Area Toll Authority*

10:05 am
Metropolitan Transportation Commission*

* Webcast on <www.mtc.ca.gov>.

Note: Dates, times and locations of MTC meetings may change. Please confirm by calling 510.817.5757. Agendas, updated meeting schedules and meeting packets are posted on MTC’s Web site: <www.mtc.ca.gov>.

Announcements



Online Poll

Be part of the ongoing Transportation 2035 conversation by taking our online survey, which mirrors the telephone poll described on the back page. Just log on to <www.mtc.ca.gov/T2035> by January 18, 2008.

Call for Projects

Got an innovative idea for smoothing traffic or improving public transit in your community? MTC is soliciting project ideas for the *Transportation 2035 Plan*, which will guide the spending of roughly \$20 billion in discretionary transportation funds over 25 years. Projects must have a public sponsor and conform to MTC guidelines. Proposals should be submitted to the appropriate county congestion management agency for an initial screening, with the goal of submitting entries to MTC by March 5, 2008. MTC will host a regional workshop on Tuesday, January 8, 2008, from 10 am to noon in the Dahms Auditorium at the Joseph P. Bort MetroCenter to brief sponsors on the online application process. See more details at <www.mtc.ca.gov/T2035>.

“On the Move” Conference
Continued from front page

levels — an “incredibly aggressive target,” in the words of Heminger. As for freeway congestion, the working 2035 target is 21.3 hours of delay per person a year, 20 percent below 2006 levels. Both targets align with ambitious new mandates from the state Legislature and the governor.



ABAG Executive Director Henry Gardner (above) shared the stage with MTC Executive Director Steve Heminger.

Weighing the Options

The conference also was historic in terms of the bold nature of the policy options presented — proposals that in prior eras might have sparked a political backlash by their very mention.

Analysts have been looking at a high-occupancy/toll lane option (in which express buses would share an expanded diamond lane network with carpools and solo drivers willing to pay a premium for a faster ride); a rail/ferry investment option; and operational fixes to speed the flow of traffic. The latter option — which encompasses more freeway ramp metering, carpool lane gap closures, widespread synchronization of traffic signals, and incident management to quickly remove stalls and accidents — proved to be the most cost-effective for reducing travel delays.

But what became clear is that the region can’t build its way out of the global warming dilemma, since even the most “green” infrastructure scenarios barely make a dent in CO₂ emissions. MTC and ABAG staff therefore decided to test a set of very aggressive road pricing and denser land use policies.

The analysis showed that in most cases, these policies would take the region much closer to reaching the greenhouse gas emission targets than the infrastructure scenarios.

Under one hypothetical scenario, the cost of driving would rise by as much as \$1 per mile as the result of a new carbon tax based on miles driven, a congestion fee for driving during peak periods and parking surcharges. Such fees would be packaged with discounts for low-income travelers.

The “what-if” land-use scenario would concentrate the lion’s share of the region’s growth along existing and new bus and rail lines in the core areas of San Francisco, Oakland and San Jose, the idea being to reduce dependence on cars.

Planners and policymakers also are banking on the next wave of technology advances. “We clearly are going to need a completely different fleet of automobiles than the one that we drive today,” Heminger said.

Strong Support for Bold Initiatives

The various proposals were subjected to a reality check via panel discussions by experts and local officials, break-out sessions, and on-the-spot electronic polling.

Key messages distilled from “On the Move,” along with a telephone poll (see adjacent story), an online survey, stakeholder meetings and person-on-the-street interviews, will feed into a set of initial policies up for adoption by MTC in January 2008. These in turn will set the stage for the development of a Transportation 2035 investment package that will be subjected to technical analyses and more public review in the coming months.

“This is not the end of the conversation. It is the beginning of the conversation,” Gardner told the crowd.

— Brenda Kahn

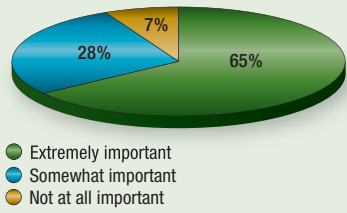
*In addition to ABAG and MTC, the interagency FOCUS exercise also involves the Bay Area Air Quality Management District and the Bay Conservation and Development Commission, both of which cosponsored the “On the Move” conference.

Facts & Figures

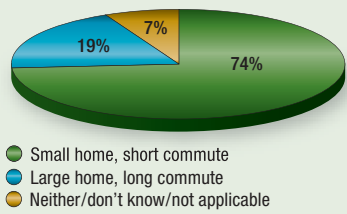
Environment Ranks High in Transportation Poll



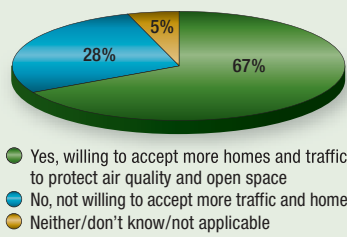
Importance of Global Warming For Transportation And Land Use Planning



Housing/Commute Trade-off



Housing Density Trade-off



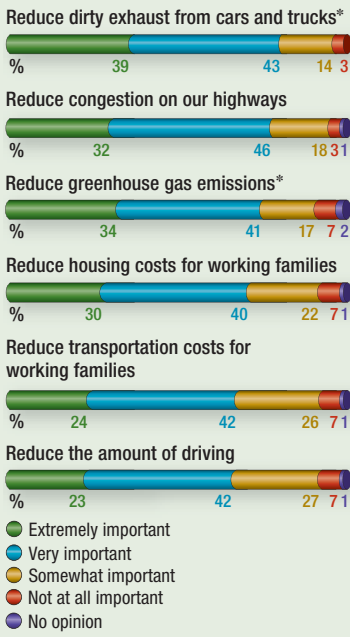
Bay Area residents express high levels of concern about air quality and global warming, and they show a willingness to accept denser development in their neighborhoods for the sake of open space and clean air. These are some of the key findings of a recent public opinion survey on transportation planning priorities commissioned by MTC as part of the outreach for the long-range *Transportation 2035 Plan*.

When asked to assess the importance of a range of transportation-related priorities, respondents said reducing vehicle-caused pollution should be the region’s top goal. Eighty-two percent of respondents believe this is extremely important or very important to the transportation future of the Bay Area. Not surprisingly for a region with the second-worst congestion problem in the nation, respondents

ranked congestion relief on highways as the next most important priority, with 78 percent of the sample saying that this is an extremely important or very important regional goal. Rounding out the top three is “reducing greenhouse gas emissions,” which 75 percent of respondents believe is extremely important or very important.

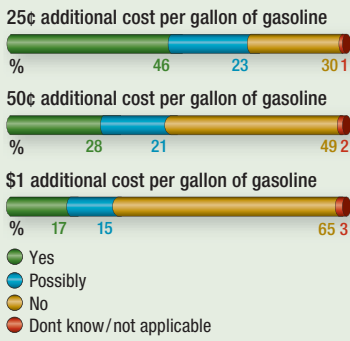
Digging deeper on the issue of global warming, the poll asked respondents: “How important is global warming when considering how we plan for transportation and land use in the Bay Area?” Nearly two-thirds of the sample — 65 percent — answered that

Transportation Priorities For the Bay Area



*Figures do not add up to 100% due to rounding.

Willing to Pay to Reduce Global Warming



global warming is extremely important and should be one of the highest priorities in transportation planning.

In an indication of how seriously the region’s residents view global warming, 69 percent of respondents said they would consider paying 25 cents more for a gallon of gasoline if it would be used to limit or reduce global warming. Predictably, support fell off at the higher cost levels of 50 cents and \$1 per gallon.

To explore attitudes toward land use — an increasingly important factor in transportation planning — the survey probed Bay Area residents’ willingness to make trade-offs when choosing a place to live. Nearly three-quarters of respondents (74 percent) said they would prefer a small home with a small backyard (if it meant a short commute to work), to a large home with a large backyard (if it meant a long commute to work). Only 19 percent of the sample preferred the large home/long commute alternative.

In another key trade-off question with land use implications, fully two-thirds (67 percent) of respondents indicated they would be willing to accept more homes and traffic in their community, if this shift protected open space and air quality in the Bay Area. Twenty-eight percent of the sample said they would not be willing to make this trade-off.

Conducted in the fall of 2007 by BW Research of Carlsbad, Calif., the telephone survey questioned (in English, Cantonese or Spanish) 1,800 randomly selected adult residents of the nine-county Bay Area. The poll had a margin of error of +/- 2.3 percent.

— Joe Curley

See complete results on MTC’s Web site at <www.mtc.ca.gov/T2035>.

Commissioners

- Bill Dodd, Chair
Napa County and Cities
- Scott Haggerty, Vice Chair
Alameda County
- Tom Ammiano
City and County of San Francisco
- Tom Azumbrado
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
- Tom Bates
Cities of Alameda County
- Bob Blanchard
Sonoma County and Cities
- Dean J. Chu
Cities of Santa Clara County
- Dave Cortese
Association of Bay Area Governments
- Dorene M. Giacomini
U.S. Department of Transportation
- Federal D. Glover
Contra Costa County
- Anne W. Halsted
San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission
- Steve Kinsey
Marin County and Cities
- Sue Lempert
Cities of San Mateo County
- Jon Rubin
San Francisco Mayor’s Appointee
- Bijan Sartipi
State Business, Transportation and Housing Agency
- James P. Spering
Solano County and Cities
- Adrienne J. Tissier
San Mateo County
- Amy Worth
Cities of Contra Costa County
- Ken Yeager
Santa Clara County

Transactions
DECEMBER 2007/JANUARY 2008

Metropolitan Transportation Commission
Joseph P. Bort MetroCenter
101 Eighth Street
Oakland, California 94607

510.817.5700 TEL.
510.817.5769 TDD/TTY
510.817.5848 FAX
info@mtc.ca.gov E-MAIL
www.mtc.ca.gov WEB

- Steve Heminger
Executive Director
- Ann Flemer
Deputy Executive Director, Operations
- Andrew B. Fremier
Deputy Executive Director, Bay Area Toll Authority
- Therese W. McMillan
Deputy Executive Director, Policy
- Randy Rentschler
Director, Legislation and Public Affairs
- Brenda Kahn
Editor
- Joe Curley
Associate Editor
- Karin Betts, John Goodwin, Georgia Lambert
Editorial Staff
- Finger Design Associates, Oakland
Design and Production
- Paris Printing, Point Richmond
Printing
- ♻️ Printed on recycled paper.
- ©2007 MTC. All rights reserved.

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

PRESORT
FIRST CLASS
U.S. Postage
PAID
Oakland, CA
Permit No. 854